



Montana Crop & Livestock Reporter

survey results summary issued twice monthly by the
USDA, NASS, Montana Field Office

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HIGHLIGHTS:

Sheep and Lamb Losses
All Wheat County estimates
Ag Prices Received
Honey Production
Chicken Inventory and Annual Egg Production

Montana Sheep and Lamb Loss 2005

Montana sheep and lamb producers lost 46,000 animals to weather, predators, disease and other causes during 2005, representing a total value of \$4.3 million. The total number of sheep and lambs lost increased 2,000 head from last year and the total value of inventory lost was 15 percent greater than a year ago. The January 1, 2005 inventory was 2 percent greater than the previous year. Sheep and lamb deaths amounted to 7.6 percent of the January 1

inventory and lambs born, up 0.1 percentage points from last year.

The number of sheep and lambs lost to all predators totaled 12,400 head, down 1,300 head from last year. Lamb losses by all predators amounted to 10,100 head, down 6 percent from last year. The number of sheep lost to all predators totaled 2,300, down 600 head from a year ago. Predators caused an estimated \$1.1 million in losses in 2005, down slightly from the previous year. Losses due to predators amounted to 2.1 percent of the January 1 inventory and lambs born and 27 percent of all sheep and lamb deaths. Coyotes remained the largest predator for both sheep and lambs. Coyotes accounted for 69 percent of the predator caused losses and 18 percent of all death losses in the state. The value of losses attributed to coyotes was \$0.7 million.

The total value of non-predatory losses was \$2.8 million in 2005, compared with \$2.3 million in 2004. Non-predatory losses accounted for 62 percent of all losses. The largest non-predatory cause of losses was diseases at 7,400 head. Sheep lost to non-predatory factors totaled 8,500 head, 4 percent lower than 2004. Non-predatory lamb losses came in at 19,900 head, 2,800 head higher than a year ago.

Producers reported more sheep and lambs lost to unknown causes this past year. This resulted in a 21 percent increase in the number of sheep and lambs lost to unknown causes from last year. Lambs lost to unknown causes totaled 4,000 head, compared with 3,100 head last year. Unknown causes claimed 1,200 sheep, unchanged from last year. The value of sheep and lambs lost to unknown causes increased to \$0.5 million.

Sheep & Lambs: Death Losses by Cause, Montana 2004-2005

Cause of Loss	SHEEP LOSS				LAMB LOSS				TOTAL LOSS			
	Number of Head		Value in Dollars (000) 1/, 3/		Number of Head		Value in Dollars (000) 2/, 3/		Number of Head		Value in Dollars (000) 3/	
	2004	2005	2004	2005	2004	2005	2004	2005	2004	2005	2004	2005
Predators												
Bear	500	200	65.0	30.0	400	200	26.9	14.9	900	400	91.9	44.9
Bobcat	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Coyote	1,500	1,500	195.0	225.0	7,700	7,000	517.4	520.8	9,200	8,500	712.4	745.8
Dog	400	200	52.0	30.0	300	300	20.2	22.3	700	500	72.2	52.3
Eagle	--	--	--	--	700	900	47.0	67.0	700	900	47.0	67.0
Fox	--	100	--	15.0	700	1,000	47.0	74.4	700	1,100	47.0	89.4
Mountain Lion	--	--	--	--	500	200	33.6	14.9	500	200	33.6	14.9
Wolf	300	200	39.0	30.0	200	100	13.4	7.4	500	300	52.4	37.4
Other Animals	--	--	--	--	100	100	6.7	7.4	100	100	6.7	7.4
Unknown Predators	200	100	26.0	15.0	200	300	13.4	22.3	400	400	39.4	37.3
Total Predators	2,900	2,300	377.0	345.0	10,800	10,100	725.6	751.4	13,700	12,400	1,102.6	1,096.4
Non-Predators												
Digestive	500	4/	65.0	4/	2,400	4/	161.3	4/	2,900	4/	226.3	4/
Respiratory	800	4/	104.0	4/	3,800	4/	255.4	4/	4,600	4/	359.4	4/
Metabolic	300	4/	39.0	4/	600	4/	40.3	4/	900	4/	79.3	4/
Other Diseases	900	4/	117.0	4/	500	4/	33.6	4/	1,400	4/	150.6	4/
Total All Diseases	2,500	1,800	325.0	270.0	7,300	5,600	490.6	416.6	9,800	7,400	815.6	686.6
Lambing Complications	1,300	1,200	169.0	180.0	3,500	4,600	235.2	342.2	4,800	5,800	404.2	522.2
Old Age	3,400	3,300	442.0	495.0	--	--	--	--	3,400	3,300	442.0	495.0
On Back	400	600	52.0	90.0	100	100	6.7	7.4	500	700	58.7	97.4
Poison	500	700	65.0	105.0	400	800	26.9	59.5	900	1,500	91.9	164.5
Theft	--	200	--	30.0	--	200	--	14.9	--	400	--	44.9
Weather Conditions	500	300	65.0	45.0	4,900	6,800	329.3	505.9	5,400	7,100	394.3	550.9
Other	300	400	39.0	60.0	900	1,800	60.5	133.9	1,200	2,200	99.5	193.9
Total Non-Predators	8,900	8,500	1,157.0	1,275.0	17,100	19,900	1,149.2	1,480.6	26,000	28,400	2,306.2	2,755.6
Unknown Causes	1,200	1,200	156.0	180.0	3,100	4,000	208.3	297.6	4,300	5,200	364.3	477.6
Total Loss	13,000	12,000	1,690.0	1,800.0	31,000	34,000	2,083.1	2,529.6	44,000	46,000	3,773.1	4,329.6

1/ Using average reported value for Ewes 1+. 2/ Lamb values equal to market year average price received for lambs multiplied by an average weight of 60 pounds per lamb. 3/ Totals may not add due to rounding. 4/ Not available. -- Denotes less than 100 head.

All Wheat Acreage, Yield, and Production by Counties and Districts, 2005

County and District	ALL						IRRIGATED			
	Planted 1/	Net Planted 2/	Harvested	Yield	Production		Planted 1/	Harvested	Yield	Production
	Acres	Acres	Acres	Bushels	Bushels	Rank	Acres	Acres	Bushels	Bushels
Deer Lodge	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Flathead	22,600	22,600	22,400	57.7	1,292,000	26	9,800	9,800	68.8	674,000
Granite	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Lake	12,200	12,200	12,200	62.6	764,000	35	7,600	7,600	72.2	549,000
Lincoln	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Mineral	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Missoula	1,800	1,800	1,700	63.5	108,000	46	700	700	72.9	51,000
Powell	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Ravalli	1,000	1,000	1,000	53.0	53,000	48	--	--	--	--
Sanders	500	500	400	30.0	12,000	51	--	--	--	--
Other	900	900	700	75.7	53,000	--	1,200	1,200	73.3	88,000
NORTHWEST	39,000	39,000	38,400	59.4	2,282,000	--	19,300	19,300	70.6	1,362,000
Blaine	195,000	195,000	193,100	36.4	7,020,000	11	5,500	5,400	56.9	307,000
Chouteau	533,100	532,700	530,600	46.5	24,695,000	1	--	--	--	--
Glacier	133,400	133,400	132,300	39.4	5,208,000	15	3,400	3,400	50.9	173,000
Hill	447,200	447,200	441,700	37.8	16,712,000	2	1,200	900	54.4	49,000
Liberty	248,800	248,800	247,200	35.1	8,670,000	4	2,000	2,000	66.5	133,000
Phillips	129,700	129,700	123,500	35.9	4,429,000	19	3,200	3,000	57.0	171,000
Pondera	179,000	179,000	176,200	47.4	8,358,000	9	10,800	10,500	66.0	693,000
Teton	147,500	147,500	145,300	48.2	7,003,000	12	8,200	8,000	60.4	483,000
Toole	237,500	237,500	234,500	36.7	8,611,000	6	--	--	--	--
Other	--	--	--	--	--	--	1,900	1,900	53.2	101,000
NORTH CENTRAL	2,251,200	2,250,800	2,224,400	40.8	90,706,000	--	36,200	35,100	60.1	2,110,000
Daniels	224,300	224,300	219,200	26.5	5,809,000	14	--	--	--	--
Dawson	164,400	164,400	162,500	30.6	4,974,000	17	2,000	2,000	68.0	136,000
Garfield	96,000	95,800	91,900	35.7	3,278,000	21	--	--	--	--
McCone	236,000	234,600	230,300	33.2	7,651,000	10	2,300	2,300	75.7	174,000
Richland	152,700	152,700	150,900	32.2	4,864,000	18	8,500	8,100	67.5	547,000
Roosevelt	342,200	342,200	340,200	28.4	9,661,000	3	5,600	5,600	58.8	329,000
Sheridan	327,100	327,100	324,700	26.1	8,483,000	7	1,700	1,700	65.3	111,000
Valley	291,300	291,300	283,900	30.5	8,659,000	5	6,400	5,600	51.6	289,000
Other	--	--	--	--	--	--	100	100	30.0	3,000
NORTHEAST	1,834,000	1,832,400	1,803,600	29.6	53,379,000	--	26,600	25,400	62.6	1,589,000
Broadwater	34,500	34,500	34,200	50.9	1,742,000	24	9,400	9,400	88.0	827,000
Cascade	142,500	142,500	141,100	49.0	6,908,000	13	2,600	2,600	62.7	163,000
Fergus	189,500	189,300	188,100	44.7	8,402,000	8	--	--	--	--
Golden Valley	24,800	24,800	24,400	35.9	875,000	34	--	--	--	--
Judith Basin	90,200	90,200	88,500	33.4	2,954,000	23	900	600	66.7	40,000
Lewis & Clark	15,700	15,700	15,600	42.2	659,000	37	2,900	2,900	75.9	220,000
Meagher	13,600	13,600	13,400	36.3	486,000	39	--	--	--	--
Musselshell	35,000	35,000	32,700	26.8	876,000	33	--	--	--	--
Petroleum	20,100	20,100	18,600	34.2	636,000	38	1,300	1,300	57.7	75,000
Wheatland	46,000	42,800	42,500	26.3	1,118,000	29	--	--	--	--
Other	--	--	--	--	--	--	2,800	2,600	51.9	135,000
CENTRAL	611,900	608,500	599,100	41.2	24,656,000	--	19,900	19,400	75.3	1,460,000
Beaverhead	5,800	5,800	5,600	86.6	485,000	40	4,700	4,600	101.3	466,000
Gallatin	56,500	56,500	55,200	59.4	3,279,000	20	21,000	20,900	82.9	1,732,000
Jefferson	1,000	1,000	1,000	38.0	38,000	49	--	--	--	--
Madison	7,800	7,800	7,500	55.9	419,000	42	4,200	4,200	68.1	286,000
Silver Bow	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Other	--	--	--	--	--	--	300	300	50.0	15,000
SOUTHWEST	71,100	71,100	69,300	60.9	4,221,000	--	30,200	30,000	83.3	2,499,000
Big Horn	121,900	121,900	116,500	44.3	5,164,000	16	11,700	11,500	73.7	848,000
Carbon	8,200	8,200	8,100	32.3	262,000	45	800	800	77.5	62,000
Park	10,300	10,300	9,600	41.3	396,000	44	2,400	2,400	68.3	164,000
Stillwater	38,700	38,700	37,900	29.4	1,114,000	30	--	--	--	--
Sweetgrass	2,300	2,300	2,200	29.5	65,000	47	--	--	--	--
Treasure	6,600	6,600	6,600	67.7	447,000	41	3,700	3,700	93.8	347,000
Yellowstone	101,100	100,700	92,400	33.2	3,071,000	22	3,900	3,900	78.7	307,000
Other	--	--	--	--	--	--	600	600	63.3	38,000
SOUTH CENTRAL	289,100	288,700	273,300	38.5	10,519,000	--	23,100	22,900	77.1	1,766,000
Carter	42,400	42,400	36,900	27.6	1,020,000	31	--	--	--	--
Custer	27,100	27,100	24,100	27.8	671,000	36	--	--	--	--
Fallon	40,900	40,700	38,400	29.9	1,150,000	28	--	--	--	--
Powder River	16,500	16,500	13,700	29.1	399,000	43	--	--	--	--
Prairie	35,100	35,100	34,600	33.5	1,160,000	27	2,500	2,200	68.6	151,000
Rosebud	45,200	45,200	43,300	30.9	1,337,000	25	1,300	1,300	95.4	124,000
Wibaux	36,500	36,500	35,900	27.3	980,000	32	--	--	--	--
Other	--	--	--	--	--	--	900	800	61.3	49,000
SOUTHEAST	243,700	243,500	226,900	29.6	6,717,000	--	4,700	4,300	75.3	324,000
MONTANA	5,340,000	5,334,000	5,235,000	36.8	192,480,000	--	160,000	156,400	71.0	11,110,000

1/ Counties with less than 500 acres planted are combined into "other" counties to avoid disclosure of individual information. 2/ Planted acres less winter wheat replanted to spring wheat.

January 2006 Prices Received

January 2006 full-month crop prices were mostly lower compared with December 2005. Montana's winter wheat dropped \$0.18 from December to \$3.41 per bushel; spring wheat was down \$0.04 to \$3.72 per bushel; and durum wheat prices fell \$0.47 to \$3.33 per bushel. Feed barley prices rose \$0.04 from the previous month to \$1.69, but malt barley prices decreased \$0.11 to \$2.93 per bushel.

The mid-February price for alfalfa hay rose \$2.00 to \$64.00 per ton from January but all other hay decreased \$2.00 to \$60.00 per ton. Mid-February grain prices were mostly higher than the previous month with winter wheat at \$3.56 per bushel, spring wheat was \$3.59 per bushel, durum wheat was \$3.61 per bushel, malt barley was \$3.11 per bushel, and feed barley was \$1.76 per bushel.

Livestock prices for the full month of January were mostly higher than the previous month. Beef cattle rose \$2.20 to \$101.00 per cwt. Steer and heifer prices decreased \$1.00 to \$119.00 per cwt. Cows

rose \$1.70 per cwt to \$50.90. The price for calves was up \$1.00 to \$148 per cwt, a new record high. Sheep prices decreased \$2.50 to \$43.20 per cwt and lambs dropped \$19.00 to \$105.00 per cwt. All milk prices decreased \$0.90 from last month to \$14.60 per cwt. Steer and heifer prices for mid-February were \$117.00 per cwt, cows were \$51.40 per cwt, and all milk prices were \$14.80 per cwt. The preliminary calf price was \$152.00 per cwt, and, if realized, will be a new record high.

Nationally, prices for January and changes from December were as follows: winter wheat was \$3.45, down \$0.01; spring wheat was \$3.69, unchanged; durum wheat was \$3.29, down \$0.10; the all barley price was \$2.47, down \$0.02; steer and heifer prices were \$102.00, up \$2.10 per cwt; cows were \$47.30, up \$0.10; calves were \$141.00, up \$7.00; sheep were \$47.70 per cwt, up \$0.80; lambs were \$96.10, down \$5.90 per cwt; all milk prices were \$14.50, down \$0.30.

The U.S. mid-February winter wheat

price was \$3.67 per bushel, spring wheat was \$3.70 per bushel, durum wheat was \$3.33 per bushel, all wheat was \$3.66 per bushel, malt barley was \$2.81 per bushel, feed barley was \$1.90 per bushel, and all barley was \$2.55. Steer and heifer prices were \$98.10 per cwt, cow prices were \$48.50, calves were \$142.00 per cwt, all hog prices were \$41.20 per cwt, and all egg prices were \$0.495 per dozen.

The preliminary All Farm Products Index of Prices Received by Farmers in February, at 113, based on 1990-92=100, is unchanged from January. The Crop Index is up 5 points (4.6 percent) but the Livestock Index decreased 4 points (3.4 percent). Producers received higher commodity prices for oranges, wheat, hay, and hogs. Lower prices were received for cattle, tomatoes, milk, and eggs. The overall index is also affected by the seasonal change based on a 3-year average mix of commodities a producer sells. Increased average marketings of cattle, milk, broilers, and strawberries offset decreased marketings of corn, soybeans, wheat, and cotton.

United States Index Summary

INDEX (1990-92=100)	January 2005	February 2005	January 2006	February 2006
Prices Received	111	114	113	113
Prices Paid, Interest, Taxes, & Farm Wage Rates 1/	137	137	146	146
Ratio 2/	81	83	77	77

1/ Prices paid indexes (1990-92=100) published monthly. 2/ Ratio of index of prices received by farmers to index of prices paid.

Montana Average Farm Prices Received

Commodity	UNIT	Monthly Average				Change From Previous		Mid-Month Average	
		Montana		U.S.		Month	Year	Montana	U.S.
		Jan. 2005	Dec. 2005	Jan. 2006	Jan. 2006	Dec. 2005	Jan. 2006	February 15, 2006	February 15, 2006
		Dollars							
Winter Wheat	Bu.	3.52	3.59	3.41	3.45	-0.18	-0.11	3.56	3.67
Durum Wheat	Bu.	3.68	3.80	3.33	3.29	-0.47	-0.35	3.61	3.33
Spring Wheat	Bu.	3.85	3.76	3.72	3.69	-0.04	-0.13	3.59	3.70
All Wheat	Bu.	3.69	3.66	3.53	3.52	-0.13	-0.16	3.58	3.66
Barley, All	Bu.	2.77	2.85	2.60	2.47	-0.25	-0.17	2.75	2.55
Feed Barley	Bu.	1.67	1.65	1.69	1.93	+0.04	+0.02	1.76	1.90
Malt Barley	Bu.	3.06	3.04	2.93	2.63	-0.11	-0.13	3.11	2.81
Oats	Bu.	n/a	n/a	n/a	1.73	n/a	n/a	n/a	1.78
Alfalfa Hay	Ton	78.00	67.00	62.00	95.60	-5.00	-16.00	64.00	99.20
All Other Hay	Ton	68.00	66.00	62.00	79.30	-4.00	-6.00	60.00	83.20
All Hay Baled	Ton	76.00	67.00	62.00	91.20	-5.00	-14.00	63.00	95.00
Steers & Heifers	Cwt	107.00	120.00	119.00	102.00	-1.00	+12.00	117.00	98.10
Cows	Cwt	51.50	49.20	50.90	47.30	+1.70	-0.60	51.40	48.50
Beef Cattle 1/	Cwt	95.90	98.80	101.00	95.10	+2.20	+5.10	103.00	92.60
Calves	Cwt	127.00	147.00	148.00	141.00	+1.00	+21.00	152.00	142.00
Sheep 2/	Cwt	59.50	45.70	43.20	47.70	-2.50	-16.30	n/a	n/a
Lambs 2/	Cwt	126.00	124.00	105.00	96.10	-19.00	-21.00	n/a	n/a
All Milk	Cwt	15.70	15.50	14.60	14.50	-0.90	-1.10	14.80	13.80

1/ Composite of steers, heifers, and cows. 2/ Mid-month prices for sheep and lambs discontinued.

2005 Montana and U.S. Honey Production

Montana honey producers with five or more colonies during 2005 produced 8.7 million pounds of honey, down 19 percent from 2004. The estimate of honey production includes production by colonies that were in the state for part of the year. There were 130,000 colonies producing honey in 2005, compared with 140,000 colonies in 2004. The honey yield per colony was 67 pounds, down 10 pounds from a year ago. Stocks on hand on December 15, 2005 were estimated at 3.1 million pounds, down from 3.8 million pounds in 2004.

Prices for Montana honey dropped \$0.25 per pound to \$0.80 per pound in 2005. The value of 2005 honey production was \$7.0 million dollars, down 38 percent from last year due to lower prices and production.

U.S. honey production in 2005 from producers with five or more colonies totaled 175 million pounds, down 5 percent from 2004. There were 2.41 million colonies producing honey in 2005, down 6 percent from 2004. Yield per colony averaged 72.5 pounds, up 1 percent from the 71.8 pounds in 2004. Colonies which produced honey in more than one State were counted in each State where the honey was produced, therefore yields per

colony may be understated. Colonies were not included if honey was not harvested. Producer honey stocks were 62.4 million pounds on December 15, 2005, up 2 percent from a year earlier. Stocks held by producers exclude stocks held under the commodity loan program.

Honey prices in the United States decreased during 2005 to 90.4 cents, down 15 percent from 106.9 cents in 2004. Prices are based on retail sales by producers and sales to private processors and cooperatives. State level honey prices reflect the portions of honey sold through retail, co-op and private channels. Honey prices for each color class are derived by weighing quantities sold for each marketing channel. Honey prices for 2005 were lower than the previous year for all color class totals.

2005 Chicken Inventory and Egg Production

There were 480,000 chickens on Montana farms and ranches on December 1, 2005, unchanged from a year ago. The December 1, 2005 inventory included 340,000 layers 20 weeks old and older and 138,000 pullets. The total value of all chickens on December 1, 2005 was \$1.3 million, down 18 percent from last year. The average value per bird, at \$2.70, was down \$0.60 per bird from 2004.

Montana chickens produced 106 million eggs during the year ending November 30, 2005, down 1 percent from 2004. The state had an average of 350,000 layers in 2005, down 5,000 from a year ago. The annual average production per layer on hand was 303 eggs, up from 302 in 2004.

In the U.S., layer numbers during 2005 averaged 344 million, up slightly from the year earlier. The annual average production per layer on hand in 2005 was 262 eggs, up slightly from the 2004 average of 261.

U.S. egg production during the year ending November 30, 2005 totaled a record high 90.0 billion eggs, up 1 percent from 2004. Table egg production, at 76.9 billion eggs, was up 1 percent from the previous year. Hatching egg production, at 13.1 billion eggs, up 2 percent from 2004.

The total number of chickens on hand in the United States on December 1, 2005 (excluding commercial broilers) was 453 million birds, down slightly from last year.

The total value of all chickens in the U.S. on December 1, 2005 was \$1.13 billion, up 1 percent from December 1, 2004. The average value increased from \$2.48 per bird on December 1, 2004, to \$2.50 per bird on December 1, 2005.

COMING IN NEXT REPORTER

Annual Red Meat Production
Potato Stocks
Milk Production
Cattle on Feed
Egg Production
Red Meat Production
Wheat and Barley Movement

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